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accompanying engraving is a view on that creek, and was taken from a study by E. W. Durand, a young artist of great promise, as one who is to give a truthful and vigorous rendering of the lessons of nature.

The mountains of America are, in many respects, the most varied and striking objects in its scenery. They are not, as a whole, so grand in their outline and effect as the mountains of Southern Europe, but they are richer in studies and the details of the picturesque. Their sides are thick in choice recesses, where the artist may find rocks and trees and cascades in imposing dispositions.

The chasms are often terrible, the defiles vast, and the wooded sides always impressive, especially under the influence of an autumn atmosphere. The Catskill raises its blue height some three thousand feet, full of wild and wonderful scenes. The White Mountains furnish many noble rocky views. The Alleghanies are never monotonous. The Rocky Mountains abound in all the elements of savage scenery. The Adirondacks, with their cone-like peaks, jagged ridges, wooded sides, echoing along which is heard the sound of numerous cascades; and the lakes that repose in wooded solitudes at their bases, form a noble feature in our northern mountain scenery. The Adirondack Pass—a gorge between two mountains, filled with huge rocks surmounted with green trees, and the precipice rising on one of its sides to the height of a thousand feet—is a wild and dreadful scene.

Rocks form a feature in the scenery of America, which the lover of nature and the artist cannot very well overlook. They appear solitary or associated, wild or beautiful in the mantling mass of centuries. We do not speak now so much of the solid pyramidal pile, or the crags that range the upper summits of the mountains, as those that guard the gorges and passes of

mountain chains, or lie deep within the woods that clothe their sides. There are almost endless recesses in American mountains, and in these, unseen and untold studies for the artist. The gnarled and knotted roots of the maple, big with age, spread out their folds among huge fragments of the rent peaks, now clothed with lichens or moss in their fall, or washed by the playful cascade fringed with inimitable green. Among our fallen rocks, thus beautified and rendered picturesque, there are innumerable haunts and walks of wisdom. There is another class of rocks which the genius of our people, and especially the Puritan descendants in New England, have ennobled by associations.

The prairies are, perhaps, the most distinctive feature of our scenery. They are altogether unlike the steppes of Russia, dreary and cold; the gloomy brown heaths of Great Britain; and the sianos of South America, ever subject to the dreadful dominion of floods or torrid heat. The grassy, the timbered, and the undulating prairies of the West, are vast desert gardens, where the wild flowers flaunt in gaudiness, and unnumbered animals find a playground. Vast and fertile, they await the advancing steps of our people to subdue them.

“ These are the gardens of the desert, these
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,
For which the speech of England has no name—
The prairies. I behold them for the first,
And my heart swells, while the dilated sight
Takes in the encircling vastness. Lo! they stretch
In airy undulations, far away,
As if the ocean, in his gentlest swell,
Stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed
And motionless for ever. Motionless!
No, they are all unchained again.”—*Bryant.*

THE INUNDATION.

THE road from Alessandria to Plaisance passes through some of the most delightful scenery it is possible to imagine. Trees, gardens, corn-fields, vineyards rich with purple grapes, green valleys covered with luxuriant foliage, snow-white cottages peeping out from the clustering trees, moss-grown paling, and silver streams, on the margin of which the reeds spring up and the water-fowl find homes. All these things together present at every turn the most charming prospect to the eye of the traveller; and whether seen at early dawn, at broad noon-day, or set of sun, are delightfully picturesque and full of romantic beauty.

It was the spring-time of the year. The fields, the gardens, the forests, and the vineyards were full of promise. Every leaf and bud and opening flower indicated the approach of summer, and there was a serenity and beauty over everything that made the humble village, with its quaint old cottages, its winding street, its simple church, and brotherhood of aged trees that girdled it about, a most delightful place. It was a pleasant thing to stand beneath the trellised avenue that led to the door of Francesco's dwelling, as it commanded a view of the whole village, being built on the rising ground of the hill. It was a beautiful prospect. There the road that led to the mountains; there the wide-stretching fields; here the stream that, flowing down the hills, looked like a silver ribbon from afar, but deepened and widened as it came along, babbling as it came. Standing beneath the porch, looking about him as the day declined, was Francesco himself, a handsome, well-made fellow; the rays of the setting sun were gilding the coming night with their departing glory. As Francesco regarded the prospect before him, it seemed to him as if the mountain stream was wider than of yore—as if it tossed and tumbled as it came with more than wonted vigour—as if the murmur of the water increased in loudness; but he thought nothing of it. Amid the varied-tinted clouds, that like some fairy-land stretched out in red and gold and purple, the sun sank down and twilight deepened into night.

That night a storm came on. Rain fell in torrents; the thunder awakened the simple villagers with its awful music; and by the broad glare of the lightning they saw the mountain stream no longer like a silver ribbon, but a sheet of water, pouring down upon them, sweeping over fields, vineyards, and gardens, and threatening in its impetuous course to destroy everything before it. This might have been expected. Heavy rains had fallen during the winter, the snows had blocked up the mountain passes, and danger had been apprehended. That apprehension was now realised. The greatest alarm prevailed; people fled in every direction. The waters were rapidly rising. Francesco, with his mother, his wife, and children, attempted to escape. Their peril was great. The mother of Francesco was old and infirm, utterly unable to help herself; he had to bear her in his arms as he fled. His wife led her eldest son by the hand, and bore her infant in its cradle on her head. In such a terrible scene as that which presented itself to them they sought help in vain. Every tie of friendship seemed to be broken; every one sought their own safety, and waited not to render help to others; and the tempest still raged, and higher and higher the water rose, plunging and roaring and casting its showers of spray over every obstacle it encountered, bearing away on its ruffled surface many a household treasure. Francesco and his family pushed bravely on towards the little bridge which stemmed the stream. Judge of their despair, when they found it a mere wreck—when, as well as the light would let them, they noticed its old timbers tossed to and fro on the troubled water, and only a remnant of the structure still remaining. Torches flitting here and there added to the wildness of the prospect; the darkness which covered everything was at intervals broken by the broad glare of the lightning, the deafening roar of the waters, and the pealing thunder, making stout hearts quake.

“ Help! help!”

The rising waters threaten the speedy destruction of the

little group who have found a refuge on the bridge. There seems no help, and they look despairingly in one another's faces. They must perish; the strong peasant might swim, but his wife, his children, his paralysed mother make the sturdy man stand by them in life or in death. Suddenly they hear theplash of an oar.

"Courage! courage!" cries a voice; "help is at hand!"

"Alas! no," murmur the little group; "we are surely lost; there is no way of escape."

"Courage! courage!" cries the voice again; "God is merciful; keep still—hold fast by the bridge!"

A broad flash of lightning shed its strange fitful lustre over the scene of desolation. The group on the broken fragment of the bridge saw it all; the wide waste of water; the roofs of cottages; the upper branches of the trees; the high mountains with their caps of snow;—more than this—they beheld a boat tossed to and fro by the struggling waters, but guided by a strong man, who seemed a stranger to all fear. The rest is soon told. Their deliverer having placed the party in his boat, guided his little craft with consummate skill, brought them to a place of safety; and then, without a word, or sign, or token of recognition, without declaring his name or asking theirs, he left them.

* * * *

Many years after this poor family had been so miraculously saved and restored to their cottage, a stranger was announced, who, journeying on that road, begged their hospitality. It was evening when the stranger entered, and, without taking off his Spanish cloak, which half-concealed his features, he took his seat by the fire in silence. A table was soon spread with rustic dainties, but the guest accepted only a glass of water, and seemed absorbed in melancholy reflection. There were two or three friends at the peasant's house that night, and they regarded with astonishment the new comer, so solemn, so mysterious, and yet withal so kind and gentle in his way. They whispered among themselves, and suggested half-a-dozen romantic solutions to this most knotty problem; but unmoved and in silence the stranger still sat, shrouded in his Spanish cloak and gazing into the fire. Presently he turned and asked the name of the village.

"Marengo, eccellenzo," replied the peasant with profound obeisance.

"Marengo! Marengo! cruel chance!" The stranger said this more to himself than to his host, and then demanded whether it was not the locality of the famous battle of the 14th of June, 1800.

"The same, eccellenzo."

"It was a gloriously well-fought fight! valiantly maintained on both sides—a glorious fight!"

"You may say that—twice gained, twice lost; the Austrians, who were the conquerors for three hours, were in six hours more in full flight."

"Brave French!" said the stranger; "it was a noble triumph."

"A magnificent day, eccellenzo, but one of frightful carnage."

"You were there?"

"I served under the tri-colour flag."

"And you have not forgotten the battle?"

"Eccellenzo," said the man, "there are two things I shall never forget but in death; my life has twice been saved; once from fire and a soldier's right arm, once from water; I have forgotten neither the one nor the other."

"I should like to talk to you, if you are willing," said the stranger, "about this battle of Marengo; I have half an hour to stop in the village."

"Eccellenzo shall know all that I know. When the soldiers of the little corporal had climbed with the chamois amid the snows of Mont St. Bernard, they descended into the plains of the Apennines, the Po, the Tessin, and the Adda. The French head-quarters were removed to Voghera, and took up a position round Tortona to blockade it by divisions.

Eccellenzo knows well enough that if the Austrian commander was doubtful as to what line of conduct he ought to pursue, this was his time to determine. As long as he held Genoa, he had a means of escape. For Genoa the French fought from a full knowledge of its value. The little corporal hastened to derive all the advantage he could from the urgency of the Austrians, which was wise enough in him, as your eccellenzo knows; so he ordered the banks of the Po to be guarded, and the passes between Piedmont and Genoa to be gained."

"Your memory serves you well."

"A soldier's memory serves him well, eccellenzo; the lessons of the battle-field are not easily forgotten. But to proceed. On the 14th of June the great battle took place. General Bonaparte had been over the ground, his grey coat and cocked hat had been seen at all parts of the field, and his voice had instructed the engineers and given courage to the soldiers. Early in the morning the cannon poured forth their rough salute, and at it we went. It was a terrible struggle; the Austrians were in great force, and after a long and well-contested engagement we had to fly. But we fled with honour. Bonaparte cheered us, and a word from him was better than a jewel. The brave grenadiers fought nobly; three times they returned to the charge, and three times were they routed by the enemy's cavalry; balls ploughed up the ground and fell as thick as snow-flakes on a wintry day; but those brave grenadiers were undaunted—they were not soldiers, eccellenzo, they were lions! Before their bayonets and the swords of the cavalry the best troops of Austria were compelled to give way—they fought as if honour was everything and life was nothing, struggled like true heroes as they were, and heeded not the gory bed in which so many slept that night."

"Brave men!" quoth the stranger, "they were worthy of their brave leader, and learnt from him true courage!"

"Everything," said the peasant, "was discouraging to the French army, but their fortitude and courage changed their situation in the course of two hours afterwards. When Mourrier and Desaix arrived, the heaps of dead and dying might have cooled their ardour; but, nothing daunted, they rushed on to victory and glory. For fourteen hours the armies were within musket-shot of one another; victory wavered on each side four times during the day; sixty pieces of cannon were alternately lost and won."

"Would that the Sardinians," said the stranger, "had somewhat of this old French courage; but alas! those days are gone." As he did so, he hastily moved his cloak, and in doing so, the peasant noticed his richly embroidered cuff.

With the sharpness of an old soldier the peasant recognised this mark of distinction, and with a military salute, said:—

"Pardon me, general, but are you not connected with the Sardinians? Did you not yourself fight with the rest against Austrian power?"

"What if I did?" he answered; "the courage of Sardinia has long departed; there is nothing left for her but shame and captivity."

"I have good reason to remember these gallant men, though," returned the peasant; "in the heat of the battle they came up and did good service; they had good hearts, good arms, good swords, and a man among them whose every word and gesture inspired courage and incited to victory!"

"Of whom do you speak?"

"Charles Albert: a young colonel, seventeen or thereabouts, with all the energy of a young soldier, and all the wisdom of an old one."

"You speak in flattering terms," the stranger said.

"Not one word too much," the peasant answered. "I admired him then, and I honour him still—more than this, I have to thank him for my own life."

"How so?"

"Your eccellenzo must know, that in one of their charges, as the grenadiers were repulsed, and the Austrian cavalry chased us sorely, I fell. Two or three Austrians were about me in a moment, and when I regained my feet I had to struggle hard

for life, not to say liberty, for that was out of the question. As I struggled against these unequal odds, up came an Italian troop with Charles Albert at their head—it turned the fortune of the fight, it saved my life. He spoke to me one word of kind encouragement, and, as I had been disarmed, threw me a silver-mounted pistol, which your eccellenza must know I still preserve."

There was a strange tone in the voice of the stranger as he asked to look at this memento of Marengo. His wish was

"Not so; you remember the night of the flood."

"I shall never forget it."

"You remember the unknown friend who brought his boat to your rescue."

"Surely I shall never fail to remember him."

"I am that man! Bear me still in affectionate remembrance, and in all my wanderings let me cheer myself with this one thought, that there is a family in Piedmont to whom I have rendered help and who are grateful for it!"



PRANCESCO AND HIS FAMILY ESCAPING FROM THE FLOOD.

instantly complied with. "Ah!" said he, "this is it, truly enough: how things have changed since then!" He let fall his cloak, lifted his broad hat, and the group saw the features of Charles Albert.

"The king! The king!" they cried.

"Stop," he said; "no longer call me by that name. I am an uncrowned king; days of royalty with me are over."

The peasants knelt and kissed his hand.

"Things are indeed changed since that first meeting," Francesco said.

"Ay, and since our second!"

"How so, sire? Is not this the second?"

With this he took a kind farewell of the group, wended his way from the village, and they saw him no more.

It will be recollected that in 1848 Charles Albert, the king of Sardinia, put himself at the head of the movement in Italy for Austrian expulsion. His efforts met with total defeat at the battle of Novaro, and he abdicated in favour of his son Victor Emmanuel. This monarch immediately concluded a treaty with the Austrians, and reimbursed them on account of the expenses of the war. Charles Albert died at Oporto, on the 28th of July, 1819.